REMARKS

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. It is respectfully submitted that the enclosed amendment obviates the alleged indefiniteness. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Aswell. Claim 1 is independent. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites in pertinent part, "a plurality of bodies are connected in series and respectively interposed between the plurality of nodes, each body having a switch element and a resistance element ***which are connected in series***; a ***plurality*** of test terminals ..." (emphasis added). Exemplary embodiments of the present invention are illustrated in, for example, Figures 1 and 2 of Applicants' drawings, in which switch elements 21 and resistance elements 26 are connected in series. According to one aspect of the present invention, in view of the claimed arrangement, it can be made possible for plural terminals to be collectively examined for detecting short circuits. In this regard, it would be unnecessary to test each of the plural terminals.

On the other hand, Aswell appears to be completely silent as to a ***plurality*** of test terminals. In any event, Aswell does not disclose or suggest the alleged switch element NMOS and resistance element 180 being connected in series. In contrast, as shown in Figure 21 of Aswell, the alleged switch element NMOS and resistance element 180 are merely connected to the same node and are expressly NOT connected in series.

As anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102 requires that each and every element of the claim be disclosed, either expressly or inherently (noting that "inherency may not be established by

probabilities or possibilities", *Scaltech Inc. v. Retec/Tetra*, 178 F.3d 1378 (Fed. Cir. 1999)), in a single prior art reference, *Akzo N.V. v. U.S. Int'l Trade Commission*, 808 F.2d 1471 (Fed. Cir. 1986), based on the forgoing, it is submitted that Aswell does not anticipate claim 1, nor any claim dependent thereon.

Under Federal Circuit guidelines, a dependent claim is nonobvious if the independent claim upon which it depends is allowable because all the limitations of the independent claim are contained in the dependent claims, *Hartness International Inc. v. Simplimatic Engineering Co.*, 819 F.2d at 1100, 1108 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Accordingly, as claim 1 is patentable for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims dependent thereon are also patentable. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are patentable based on their own merits by adding novel and non-obvious features to the combination.

Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

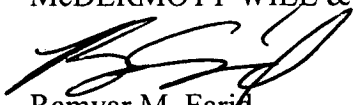
Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper,

including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

McDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP



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